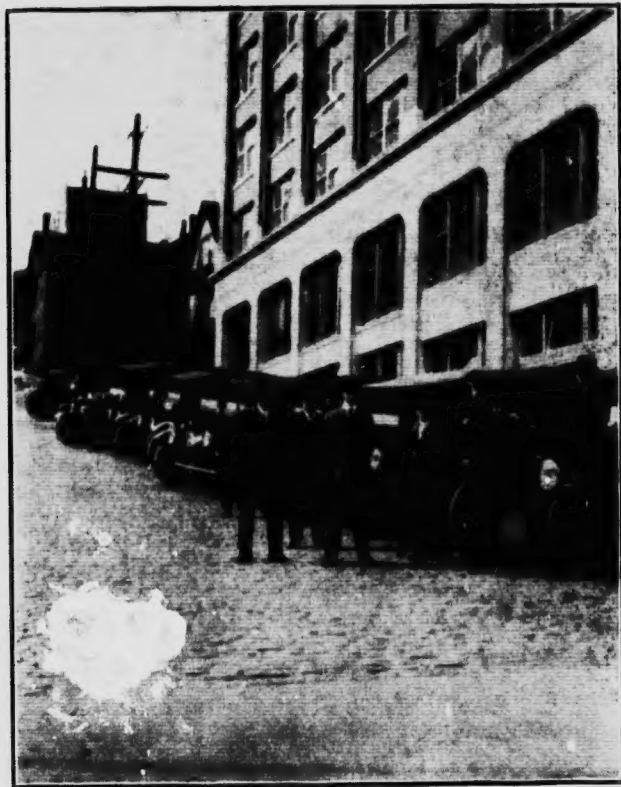




Blue Funnel Motor Line, Limited



Some of the cars of the Blue Funnel Motor Line, Ltd., the oldest established motor line in B. C. The whole of the equipment of this Company are practically new 1917 cars, as all the old cars were turned in and new cars purchased this year, among them being 5 Cadillacs, 7 Hudsons and 15 Studebakers. Two McLaughlins and 7 new cars on Fraser Valley routes.

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TO THE MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATURE AND THE CITY AND MUNICIPAL COUNCILS OF THE CITIES AND MUNICIPALITIES ON THE LOWER MAINLAND OF BRITISH COLUMBIA.

A STATEMENT OF THE BUSINESS AND GROUND COVERED IN THE OPERATION OF THE BLUE FUNNEL MOTOR LINE, LIMITED.

We are a Registered Company in the Province of British Columbia and therefore have a charter for the business we are doing.

We are operating, not only from the City of Vancouver to New Westminster, but are operating in eleven different cities and municipalities in the Province of British Columbia, viz: Vancouver, South Vancouver, Burnaby, New Westminster, Coquitlam Municipality, Coquitlam City, Port Moody City, Maple Ridge Municipality, in the Municipalities of Surrey, Langley and Delta.

We have our own offices in the City of Vancouver, New Westminster, and other places, and we operate only from our offices and not from the public streets.

We claim we have a business all our own, as we do not parallel the B. C. Electric tracks; we make the trip from Vancouver to New Westminster in 30 minutes, which is considerably faster than the street car. We leave on a fifteen-minute schedule from our two offices in Vancouver City and on a ten-minute schedule from New Westminster coming to Vancouver, but at very busy hours of the day we run about a seven-minute service. Our charge is fifty cents return fare; the B. C. Electric Railway Company charge thirty-five cents return.

This Company delivers the passengers in the residential section of the City of New Westminster in about twenty-five minutes from the time they leave the Vancouver office. It takes the street car, with transferring from the main line car at Highland Park to the city line down Sixth street, approximately seventy minutes to deliver passengers to the same place.

Starting from our office at New Westminster, we pick up passengers on Sixth street, Eighth street, or Twelfth street, when ordered to do so by phone or otherwise, and we land them in Vancouver in about twenty-five minutes from the time we pick them up. If our line were not in operation the passengers would have to take the City car down to the Interurban station at New Westminster, and you will see by this that we save the public a great deal of time.

This Company has forty-one cars and forty-seven men, and we have been operating for three years, and during the whole of this period we have only been tied up for two days from all causes, and we operate from 7:45 a.m. to 12 p.m. every day. We have no connection with any other company, and since we started in business we have had to compete with ten other opposition lines, but these other companies had little success for they only ran a few months and then went out of business.

One of these lines, known as the White Star Line, was operated from the offices of the B. C. Electric Railway Company in Vancouver, to the office of the B. C. Electric Railway Company in New Westminster, and was in operation for some time at a cut-rate of forty cents return. After operating for some time this company also went out of business.

We had an opposition line in operation for some months known as the Union Jack Motor Line at a forty-cent return rate from Vancouver to New Westminster, but they went out of business two days before the B. C. Electric strike a short time ago.

There was a rumor that this line was connected in some way with the B. C. Electric Railway Company, but of this I have no knowledge.

There is no question, however, that the White Star Line was in some way connected with the B. C. Electric, because the police inform me that they were satisfied these cars had

the right to use the B. C. Electric Railway Company's Depots at New Westminster and Vancouver for their business, which was operating from and to the two cities at a cut-rate of twenty cents each way, and they only run from these two places, and not to any other point in the Fraser Valley or elsewhere.

Before the Blue Funnel Motor Line commenced operations from Vancouver to New Westminster the charge for an automobile from one city to the other was from ten to fifteen dollars. We give the public a car that will carry eight people from or to these cities for \$2.00. We have not altered the rate since we started in business, in spite of the fact that tires have gone up 45 per cent., and gasoline and oil have gone up in price about 35 per cent., and labor on repairing cars from 60 cents to \$1.00 an hour.

When the B. C. Electric Railway Company's strike was on we handled all the through business from Vancouver to New Westminster, that is to say, that we handled all the business that offered, and could have handled more. We had practically no trouble, and the only time there was any delay in handling the passengers was from 5:45 to 6:15 in the evening, and we had all the people away from our offices by 6:30. This congestion was caused, not by the through passengers, but by the passengers we had to take for South Vancouver and Burnaby while the strike was on, as these people had no other way of getting home. I repeat again that we handled all the people that came to our office, and did not turn down one passenger.

We have never catered to local traffic in South Vancouver, Vancouver, or New Westminster; we do not take five-cent fares in Vancouver or New Westminster; we are a through line between the two cities and have never pretended otherwise. While the aforementioned strike was on we operated a five-minute service between the two cities, which you will admit was pretty fast even for these days.

There is no question that this Blue Funnel Motor Line is a necessity on the Lower Mainland of British Columbia, as we bring people in from points in the Fraser Valley who have no other way to reach Vancouver City at the time of day they wish to leave and return to their homes. It is also a necessity for the business and commercial men of the two cities, and to others whose time is worth money, as the saving of time in travelling with us is considerable.

I do not quite see how the business of the Blue Funnel Motor Line can be classed as unfair competition to the B. C. Electric Railway Company. When we started in business the Tram Company charged twenty-five cents each way to and from New Westminster. Some time afterwards they reduced their rate to thirty-five cents return, but we have kept to our original rate of twenty-five cents each way, as we cannot run for any less sum than this and stay in business. We make the trip from and to certain points in about half the time it takes on the street cars, because they have to transfer and wait at transfer points thereby taking up a great deal of time, while with us, being a through line, there are no such delays.

I notice when the B. C. Electric Railway officials travel from Vancouver to New Westminster they generally travel in their own or company autos. Why should the general public be limited to travelling by street cars when we have twelve miles of a main road and probably one of the finest roads in Canada. It puts me in mind of a story I heard of a man who built a candle factory with an investment of one hundred thousand dollars. An electric light plant came along and he wondered why he could not sell his candles.

I would like to point out that in spite of conditions and our larger fare, that people prefer to travel from Vancouver to New Westminster by automobile. We have telephone orders all day long to pick up people at Main and Seventh avenue, Kingsway and Broadway, Kingsway and Tenth, Eleventh and Twelfth, Fifteenth avenue, Sixteenth avenue, Knight road and other places on Kingsway going towards New Westminster. If we were not operating practically all of these people would have to take the car to Vancouver to the Interurban Depot to get the car for New Westminster. We save these people a great deal of time and are very much of a convenience to them.

We pay a license to the Provincial Government, the City of Vancouver, the

Municipalities of South Vancouver and Burnaby, and New Westminster City, for the right to operate from Vancouver to New Westminster, and we also have to put up a bond with these different cities; the total sum we pay per car for licenses, in Vancouver City, car and driver, thirty-five dollars per year; South Vancouver, five dollars; Burnaby, five dollars; City of New Westminster, thirty-two dollars and fifty cents for car and driver, and the bond costs ten dollars per month per car, making the total of two hundred and twelve dollars per year for licenses and bond per car per year. This bond is good anywhere in British Columbia that we are plying for hire. These licenses and bonds are almost prohibitive and in my opinion should be rectified in some way and give this and other such companies a chance to live.

In regard to the rural municipalities through which we travel, namely, from New Westminster to Port Moody City, there are no street cars or other method of communication except by our line. We run on this line through Sapperton and along the North road, the Boundary road between Burnaby and Coquitlam, along the Clark road to Port Moody, the most of this district not being served by carline or otherwise, that is from New Westminster. From Vancouver the main line of the C. P. R. runs through Port Moody. The Port Haney terminus, where we deliver our passengers, is about thirty miles from Vancouver. Our cars carry passengers from our Vancouver office to New Westminster and we transfer there to cars that leave our New Westminster office as per the schedule, and go through Maillardville, past the Government farm at Essondale, thence through Coquitlam, over the Pitt river bridge, through Pitt Meadows, through Port Hammond, and then to Port Haney, the terminus of this Port Haney Line, although we will and do take people past this point by arrangement.

On the Aldergrove run the cars leave New Westminster at 10 a.m., 4 p.m., and 5 p.m., and passengers from Vancouver leave that city to make connections, about forty minutes ahead of that time. The route followed by these cars is practically the Yale road all the way except when we have to go south along the Pacific Highway to deliver passengers to Cloverdale, then we travel the McLennan road until we strike the Yale road again.

The delivery and picking up points on the route are as follows, all scheduled from Vancouver: Vancouver to New Westminster, 25c; South Port Mann, 60c; Johnson Road, 65c; Maple Road, 65c; Coast Meridian, 75c; Clayton Corner, 75c; Hall Prairie, 80c; Latimer Road, 85c; Langley Prairie, 85c; Murraiville, \$1.00; Birch Road, \$1.10; Livingstone Road, \$1.15; Brown Road, \$1.25; Otter, \$1.25; Coquitlam Road, \$1.25; County Line Road, \$1.45; Aldergrove, \$1.50.

The terminus of this line is Aldergrove, but we do go to other places past and in the Aldergrove district when required. This line covers a district and along a route thirty-seven miles in length. The cars are well patronised and are very much of a necessity to the people of the different municipal districts through which they pass. The most of this route is served only by this line as in places it is a long distance from any transportation of any kind except ourselves.

The line known as the Coquitlam Line runs from Vancouver to New Westminster, then through part of Sapperton, Maillardville, Essondale, to Coquitlam. The cars leave on the hour, every hour from New Westminster. To make connections we leave Vancouver about forty minutes ahead of these times.

This Coquitlam Line takes in part of the same route as the Port Haney Line, but is separate and distinct, and both of them are doing a very good business and are well patronised.

The White Rock car, in the camping season especially, serves a very pressing need, as this district is unserved except by the G. N. R. Company and the Blue Funnel. The cars leave New Westminster at 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. week days, and leave Vancouver to make connection about forty minutes ahead of that. On Saturdays and Sundays a more frequent service is given, as there are a number of people go down and return at week-ends, as this is a seaside resort.

The connection and stopping places are: Vancouver to New Westminster, South Port Mann, Johnson Road, Cloverdale, Hazelmore, White Rock and Blaine. The fares are scheduled from Vancouver: Vancouver to New Westminster, 25c; to South Port Mann, 60c; to Johnson Road, 65c; Cloverdale, 75c; Hazelmore, 75c; White Rock, \$1.00, and Blaine, \$1.25.

The Boundary Bay Line, through Ladner, runs through what is known as the Delta Municipality—I think the finest farming district for its size in the Dominion of Canada. The car leaves New Westminster at 5:30 p.m. every day, and leaves Vancouver at 4:50 to make connection. The route followed is Vancouver to New Westminster, then over the Westminster Bridge, which is the only place that we parallel the B. C. Electric Company's tracks on the route. I hope Mr. Murrin does not object to this because if he does we should have to go by water, as that would be the only alternate route. After leaving the bridge we follow the Scott road to the McLennan, then west on the McLennan road to Ladner and then south along the Boundary Bay road to our terminus there. This line is through a district absolutely devoid of street car lines, and is fairly well patronised at the time of writing.

And I might say there are other places in the different districts that we cover that need extension of these lines, but under present conditions we cannot see our way to carry along any more than we are doing at the present time, although we are pushing ahead all we are able. Personally, I believe when a business is not going ahead it is going behind, and we are doing our best on all lines to serve the people with the service they require and to treat them with courtesy and consideration, look after them in every way possible, give them all the information we can, answer all inquiries, in fact treat them in such a manner that you make them a friend of the company. We get their business and they bring their friends. The line is noted for the way the business is handled, as above stated and we are well and favorably known all over the Dominion. Other companies in the transportation business should treat the people who travel with them the way we do, that is, in short, treat them so that they will come back.

In passing, I would like to point out that these different routes in the country are the feeders to our main line, and to such lines as these Mr. Murrin, in answer to a question by Commissioner Shortt as to whether his company had any objections to such lines serving a district provided they brought passengers to the centres of communication where the B. C. Electric Company lines were, Mr. Murrin answered, substantially "No"—and then he made statements qualifying the answer.

It seems to me that if we go away into these districts and bring these people to New Westminster, then they should be allowed to finish their journey by this line to Vancouver, South Vancouver, or Burnaby, as the case may be, wherever these different passengers wish to go. Then, on the other hand, there is the return journey from Vancouver to these different points. These people have been travelling with us on these various routes for the past three years, and no doubt if we are allowed to continue our operation they will travel with us for years to come, and if the ruling of any council does not allow us to operate our main trunk line on Kingsway, which is the parent body of this system, there is no doubt in my mind but that the whole system would be killed. There would be in this case a very considerable loss of revenue to Vancouver, New Westminster, and other places, for when people travel they have to spend money.

Mr. Murrin said in answer to a question from the Commissioner that his company did not object to the C. N. R. Railway paralleling their Chilliwack line and taking away a large share of the passenger and freight business, because the C. N. R. were a transportation company. I have been trying in these statements in regard to the Blue Funnel Motor Line to show that we are a transportation company, and all local capital, and all of our earnings are being spent in Vancouver and district.

We have, as I said before, approximately fifty men working directly for the Company, and thirty-five of these in Vancouver and district, nearly all married men and men unfit for military service. We have an average of thirty men driving daily from Vancouver to New Westminster. Thirty of our men have gone to France, and if we are

allowed to continue our business these men will be put to work upon their return. I can supply a list of these men to any person interested.

There is a section of business that the B. C. Electric Railway Company have lost since Kingsway was built that the company say very little, if anything, about. I refer to the freight business between Vancouver and New Westminster. Previous to the building of Kingsway and a short time afterwards the B. C. Electric Railway Company had a very large freight business, but along came the motor truck, picked up the freight at the wholesale house and delivered same to the stores in New Westminster and district, direct from the warehouse to the retailer at his store. There are no delays. You do not have to phone the B. C. Electric Railway Company freight sheds and ask if that consignment of goods—it may be fresh fruit—has come to hand yet. You don't have to do this, it is delivered to your door shortly after it is shipped.

The same proposition applies to us. We pick up passengers in their own particular district when ordered to do so by them, over the phone or otherwise, and we bring them back to the same place, if required, and we save them half an hour each way and give them a pleasant ride to and from Vancouver in the sunshine at this time of the year, and if it is in the winter we have our cars all curtained in, and a warmer connected to the muffler in real cold weather. People are more comfortable than they would be in street cars without heaters in them. I understand the latest cars of the B. C. Electric have no heaters in them, but that does not make any difference, the people like to travel with us anyway.

I make an appeal to the Legislature and Cities concerned to consider this Blue Funnel Motor Line and the question of allowing us to continue business very seriously. We are the oldest established motor line in B. C., and I firmly believe we have in this Company the foundation of the method of transportation of the future for the Province of British Columbia. The writer started this line three years ago with three cars, and we now have forty-one cars. If we are allowed to continue, who knows how many cars we will be operating even five years from the present time.

It is also a serious question from an economic standpoint. All our men are making a reasonably good living, and under the conditions as I have tried to show them, it would be a very bad thing to destroy this Company and deprive these men and their families of the things they are entitled to. For I maintain that we are a proper transportation company and are giving the best service possible under present conditions, and it would be a serious blow to the writer, as I have put into this business all I have and all I know. I have done a great many days' and also nights' work to bring this business to its present stage of development, and every man handling a transportation business of any kind knows it is a most difficult thing to handle with any measure of success.

This Company, however, is not looking for anything but consideration as a transportation company between Vancouver and New Westminster and various points in the Fraser Valley, giving the people a very necessary service, a service they require and appreciate. This I think is proved by the growth of this Company since its commencement, to the present time. That is, from three cars to forty cars in less than three years. This, I think, speaks for itself, and we feel quite safe in leaving our case in the hands of the cities affected, as the facts herewith submitted speak for themselves, and they are the facts as they exist, and cannot be controverted.

I have not made any answer to the statements made by the B. C. Electric Railway Company, because I did not wish to enter into any controversy with them, as we cannot afford to hire any lawyers or professional men to state our case, as under present conditions it keeps us very busy doing ordinary financing, without doing extraordinary financing.

All of which is respectfully submitted,

BLUE FUNNEL MOTOR LINE, LIMITED.

Thos. D. Coldicutt, Manager.

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T. D. COLDICUTT
Managing Director of the Blue Funnel Motor Line.